

## Devotional and Selections

### WINGS OF A DOVE.

Henry VanDyke.

At sunset, when the rosy light was dying,  
Far down the pathway of the West,  
I saw a lonely dove in silence flying  
To be at rest.

"Pilgrim of air!" I cried, "could I but borrow  
Thy wandering wings, thy freedom blest,  
I'd fly away from every careful sorrow,  
And find my rest."

But when the dusk of filmy veil was weaving,  
Back came the dove to seek her nest  
Deep in the forest, where her mate was grieving—  
There was true rest.

Peace, heart of mine! no longer sigh to wander:  
Lose not thy life in fruitless quest,  
There are no happy islands over yonder;  
Come home and rest.

### HE LEADETH ME.

I have found in my career that when we have been brought almost to a standstill by difficulty, it means that very soon we are going to make a great leap forward, and I follow the secret of it, I think. Difficulties bring us to our knees, and when we are in that attitude, God leads us forward, and the difficulties are either removed or we are upborne and carried past them. After we have come through the fire and the water we generally come out into a wealthy place. Anything that brings us nearer to God must be good. I have seen flood and fire distress us; but when I have seen how they bring us nearer to God, I can afford to see some churches in flames if it makes hearts burn brighter. We can rebuild the material edifice, and in the sacrifice to be made to do it the soul is built up likewise. So we, having to face difficulties, face them with this conviction, that God would lead us through them, and make us more fit as instruments in fulfilling the purposes of His dear love.

You remember that when the apostles entered the cloud they feared. I have entered many a cloud with fear; but the cloud was lighted up because Jesus was near, and it passed away and Jesus was dearer than ever and His face more glorious. But we must get up into the mountain, and it is hard climbing, but it leads us into purer air and finds us more vigorous.—Selected.

### THE PERIOD OF REPENTANCE.

It may be said that the preacher should be past the period of repentance. Perhaps we limit that period too much. The saint feels a keener sorrow for his past sins than he felt when he first believed. Besides, he is still fighting, and perhaps not always successfully. The time may come when his struggles will be over and his past errors forgotten—when he is no longer climbing up through dark gorges and over rugged heights, but is standing in the bright sunlight of the mountain top, the sorrows and the struggles of the way all forgotten. But then he will be a preacher no longer. He will be as unfit to preach to men as the angels are. Then the work of the guide will be done. Like Moses on Pisgah, he will be called only to lay down his staff and to sink to sleep at the kiss of God.—Christian Advocate.

## Quiet Hour

Seek the kingdom of God. First. Not many people do that. They put a little religion into their lives—once a week, perhaps. They might just as well let it alone. It is not worth while seeking the kingdom of God unless we seek it first. Suppose you take the helm out of a ship and hang it over the bow and send that ship to sea, will it ever reach the other side? Certainly not. It will drift about somehow. Keep religion in its place and it will take you straight through life and straight to your Father in heaven when life is over. But if you do not put it in its place you may just as well have nothing to do with it. Religion out of place in a human life is the most miserable thing in the world. There is nothing that requires to be kept in its place as religion, and its place is what? Second? Third? "First." Carry that home with you to-day—first—the kingdom of God. Make it so that it will be natural to you to think about that the very first thing.—The Standard.

"Let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God." A prayer that is hasty is likely to come from an empty head rather than from a burdened heart. Why should we wish to come before God to make a prayer to men or even to offer well-ordered words—words well suited to convey a prayer, but, after all, only empty words? Be not rash, either, in speaking to men in God's house. It is no less than treason to to stand up in the King's name and to deliver anything less than the King's message. "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools."

There are trials that come in life; that come to human hearts; that seem to eat up every green thing. But wait! life is not through yet. There are years of plenty, as well as years of famine. In one psalm we are told to come and behold what desolations he hath made in the earth. In the next verse it is said, he maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth. We ought to believe that he will give joy according to the years wherein we have seen trouble.

"If sorrow is joy in the making,  
The joy is coming on!"

—Margaret Bottome.

"True Christianity has many distinguishing elements. One of the strongest is mutual attraction among true believers. It would be a phenomenon of an alarming character were any considerable number of persons born again, saved by Christ, praying daily for the coming of his kingdom, and burning with zeal for souls of others to be without fruit. Where churches are barren it is because they have no life in them."

Many times God answers our prayers, not by bringing down his will to ours, but by lifting us up to himself. We grow strong enough to no longer need to cry for relief.—Rev. J. R. Miller, D.D.